

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, March 18. 1707.

JUST thus I foretold you, Gentlemen, it would be ; and yet I see no great Fore-cast in it, that I should claim the Title of a Conjuror. Did ever any body expect the Union to go on in *England*, and have no long Speeches cry'd about Streets, no *May-be's* and *Supposes* started, no *suggested Dangers*, no *Spectrums* to fright the World with? It could not be possible, but the *Northern* Part of *Britain* must furnish Vapours enough from so cold and moist an Air, which being exhaled by the Heats of *High-Flying* Brains, should blaze in various Meteors in our *Southern* Climate.

Who could question, but the same Spirit here would act the same ridiculous Part, as it did there, and that we should have the very Counterpart of the State Politicks of the Party?

Did not a Noble Peer, *North by Tweed*, tell the *Scots* sad and dismal Stories of the fatal Consequences of the Union? Did he not tell the Country People, they should get no *Cale*, the Merchants they should get no *Trade*, the Poor no *Salt*, the Gentlemen no *Employ*, the Ladies no *Husbands*? — And must all these Dangers befall *Scotland*, Gentlemen, and is there nothing sad and lamentable to befall *England* too?

Let's come a little to Parallels, and was ever such Contraries match'd in this World? In *Scotland*, the *Jacobite* and *Prelatist* take Care of the *Presbyterian*; in *England*, the *Occasional-Conformist* ventures his Life for the Church; the Gentlemen that never come nearer the Church than that House of *Sathan*, the Tavern, cry out in Parliament, that the Act of Security is not sufficient ;

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in *England* the Bishops are exhorted to take Care of themselves, and their Constitution by such as ——— Here's merry Sort of Doings indeed! Never did Contraries better illustrate; Never was a Treaty of Union so handsomely banter'd!

Nor can poor King *William* rest in his Grave, but he must be brought upon the Stage too——In vain, that glorious Monarch labour'd for our Peace, and dy'd a Sacrifice to our Ingratitude; but the very Vipers, he warm'd by his Influence, hiss at him, and persecute the Memory of the Man; who if he had any Failing, it was in mistaking their Hypocrisy for Merit, and bestowing his Favours on the worthless and wayward Wretches that abus'd him.

These are the People that best suit a Simily, happily brought by a noble Lord in another Case, where he brings in the *Papists*, who, pretending to worship GOD, say ten *Ave-Marias* to one *Pater-Noster*. These are the People, who pretending Liberty and Law, and the Good of *England*, pay ten Homages to King *James*, for one to King *William*.

Miracles, I believe, are no more ceased in this Age, than they were in the last; and Abundance of Parallel Cases have been to this in the World; it is not long since the Bishops and Clergy persecuted the *Dissenters* for the Security of the Church of *England*, and all Manner of Rapine and Violence was decently exercis'd against Protestants for the Benefit of the Protestant Religion—Now the Tables are nicely turn'd, and the Face of things changes; here we have the *Papist* prompts the *Presbyterians* to take Arms against the Government, in order to preserve the Protestant Religion; there you have the half in half, or Occasional Conformist applying to the Bishops to look about them, and still 'tis for the Protestant Religion.

Were ever my Lords the Bishops so banter'd? Was ever such a Jest put upon Men of their Character, as if they did not understand their Concern in the Church or in the Protestant Religion, without going for Advice to those Occasional People, against whom so many of them lately pass'd an Act of Parliament, as Persons pernicious to the Church's Safety?

And after all, what is it my Lords the Bishops are in Danger of, and what must they not do? ——— They must not settle the Kirk of *Scotland*; they must not set up *Presbytery*, lest *Presbytery* pull down the Church —Put this into *English*, They must not unite with *Presbyterians*; no Peace with Hereticks, just the same; you must not treat with that Church, that is establish'd already, nor with the People, because they differ from you, and yet you cannot but own, they differ from you in nothing essential—

The Plot against the Union stands in need of such slight weak Work as this, it cannot be upheld but by such shifting; and I wonder, the Necessity the World is in to laugh at it, does not open the Eyes of the People themselves.

When Men of the best Parts happen to be embark'd in the Defence of a bad Cause, what weak wooden Work do they make of it? How many Shifts and Turns will they make, like a Hare close hunted, to save what they see a Necessity to give up? Let any Man but ask a famous Orator of our Law, how he was put to it once to defend a *High-Flying* Cause at the Bar of the House of Lords, where a new Sacramental Test was attempted on the Subjects of *C—lina*? How willingly would that Gentleman have been without his Fee, to have shun'd the Pleading; and what sorry Reserves and Retreats did he make to extenuate, what he could not justify?

Just thus the Patriots of Tyranny are driven to their Shifts, to defend what they own by the Consequence they cannot support; when by Reason and Strength of Argument they cannot maintain their Cause, How do they seek the Shelter of all the little Subterfuges in the World to uphold them?

How do they strive to make other People complain, fill the Heads of the common People with Fears and Jealousies, and drive every Nail that will go; divide, amuse, fright, wheedle and jingle them into Discontents. In one Part, the *Presbyterians* are frighted with the threatening Encroachments of Episcopacy, Breach of their National Covenants, in consenting to establish a Prelatick Church, which they fancy themselves

selves bound to reform, subjecting themselves to a superiour Nation, quitting their Sovereignty, transposing their Crown, and the like.

In another Part, the Church of *England* are bid to look about them, and alarm'd with the frightful Apprehensions of Danger from establishing the Protestant Religion, as if *Presbytery* were the new Antichrist they talk'd of.

I must confess, I wonder much at Inferences drawn from *Popish* Experiments to alarm the Church, and that the Bishops should be warn'd of Dangers from obliging a Protestant Church, because they met with Ingratitude from the *Popish*——Let any Man tell me, when Protestants, exercising Acts of Charity, Lenity, Assistance and Support to *Popish* Powers, were otherwise treated; something of which I mention'd lately in the Case of the Emperor——

But I see no Consequence to be drawn from it, that the Spirit of Ingratitude must reign in a Protestant Church, and that the Church of *England* shall receive ungrateful Treatment from the *Presbyterian* in *Scotland*——And therefore in this, to say, *what has been, may be*, will not reach the Case——Because it cannot be prov'd, that ever the *Presbyterians* in *Scotland* have been ingrate to the Church of *England* for any Favours receiv'd, nor as I remember, has there been any Occasion given them.

But I am not answering Speeches, I have seen none yet, but what answer themselves, and merit more to be let alone, than meddled with,

The Concurring with the Terms of a Treaty is not an Act of Favour, but a necessary Justice; the Union is a mutual Stipulation, and Securities ought to be reciprocally given——Those that argue against the Church of *England*, giving the Act of Security in Church Matters to *Scotland*, are the very same Party, and they do it by the very same Arguments, as they argue in *Scotland* against the *Presbyterian* Church there, consenting to the Establishment of the *English* Church; and in this preposterous Contradiction the whole *Arcana* are discover'd, and any reasonable Man, whose Sences are at hand, may see, it is not Care of the respective Churches, but Party Feud.

A Man may in these Cases be a little merry with the Persons, but really the Subject is too serious to jest with; for this Juggling is calculated at nothing less than the fatal dividing, and consequently ruining both these Nations, as to their Peace, and all the future Prospects of their Happiness.

I hope, all the Gentlemen that have appear'd thus unhappily against it, have not the same destructive Design upon their Country; but I must confess, the Difference seems to me not to be very considerable, whether we are wilfully or ignorantly destroy'd.

And tho' in our defending our selves against Mischief, the same Resentment is not due to the well-meaning, as malicious Opposer, yet the same Opposition is certainly due to the Mischief it self.

Safety, Peace, Settlement and Strength are the immediate Advantages both Nations expect from this Union; Jealousie of one another, Prejudices and Distrust are on both sides thrown in the Way, they are equally pernicious to the main End, let them come from what hand soever; and therefore we ought with equal Care to defend our selves.

In *Scotland* a wild Attempt has been made to prove, the *Dissenters* in *England* are inclin'd to Episcopacy, and therefore not to be trusted by the Kirk there——

In *England*, strong Motions are made to render the Settlement of the Kirk in *Scotland* dangerous to the Church, and the Bishops are exhorted to look about them.

Now, one of these Designs I take to be malicious, the other ignorant, I do not say which of them is one or the other; but be it which way it will, they are equally fatal and mischievous in their Event, equally pernicious to the publick Peace, and ought with equal Care to be sent'd against in the Pursuit of the general Good of the Nation.

'Tis all one to me, whether Fool or Knave attempts to set my House on Fire, 'tis my Business to prevent my House being burnt; and as to Punishment of Parties, or Censure of Instruments, that's a thing by it self, they ought to be us'd according to their Circumstances.

Whereat